

Department of Education

**BUSINESS PLAN
2009–2010**


NOVA SCOTIA



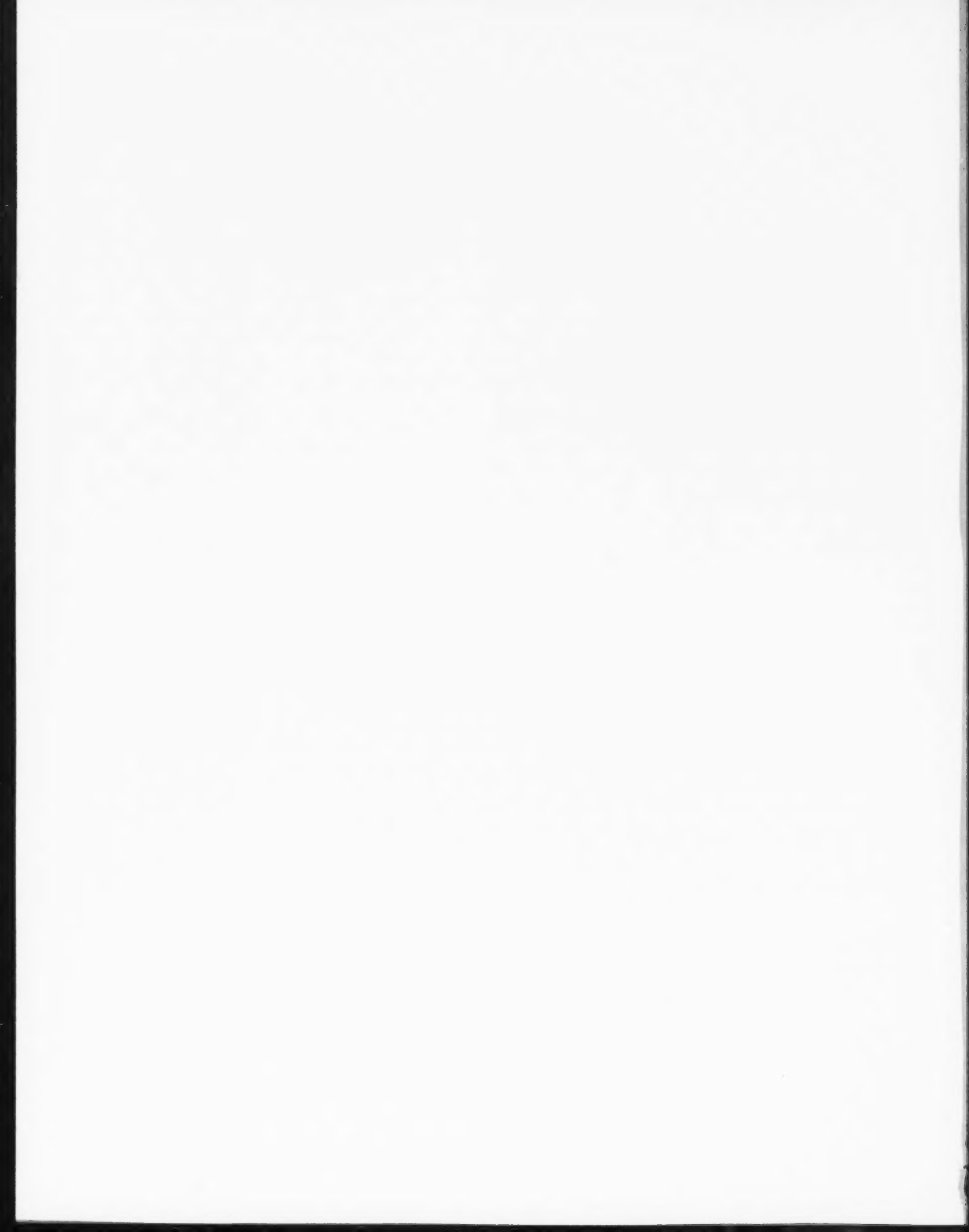
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

BUSINESS PLAN 2009–2010



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1. Message from the Minister and Deputy Minister

In keeping with the province's commitment to be more accountable to the public for its actions, all departments and agencies are required to prepare annual business plans describing their priorities for the next fiscal year. The Department of Education is proud to present its business plan for 2009–10.

In 2009–10, the Nova Scotia Department of Education will continue to support key projects introduced as a result of *Learning for Life II: Brighter Futures Together*. *Learning for Life II*, developed in collaboration with hundreds of education partners, is the department's four-year plan for primary–12 education. For example, the department will continue measuring and reporting on whole school improvement through the Nova Scotia School Accreditation Program, which engages schools in an extensive review of their performance and student achievement. We will also work with school boards and other partners to develop and embed professional learning practices in our schools, supported by strong instructional leadership. We will continue to support boards in providing mathematics and literacy mentor services to their schools.

The department will provide in-servicing on functional behaviour assessments in order to identify challenges that are impacting student learning. Also, the department will collaborate with mental health service providers to identify, monitor, and refer students requiring mental health supports. In collaboration with boards and their schools, the department will expand co-operative education opportunities and the highly successful Options and Opportunities (O₂) program.

The Department of Education continues to work collaboratively to address important issues. The Department of Education works with the departments of Health Promotion and Protection, Justice, Community Services and other partners to support school boards and schools in addressing drug use prevention. The library funding task force completed its report and recommendations on multi-year funding for libraries and the proposal is ready for consideration by Cabinet. Also, the department has created a new Mi'kmaq Liaison Office to improve supports for Mi'kmaq and other Aboriginal students in the province. The department is currently negotiating a new multi-year Protocol for Agreements in conjunction with the CMEC and with the federal government to support official language education.

The department will continue to work with its partners to ensure that Nova Scotia post-secondary students (which include students at universities, the Nova Scotia Community College, and private career colleges) have access to an equitable, high quality education. The second Memorandum of Understanding on University Funding and Tuition Fees, signed March 2008, freezes tuition fees for all students at Nova Scotia universities for 2008–09 to 2010–11. The department is committed to bringing Nova Scotia tuition fees to meet the national average by 2010–11 and has established the Nova Scotia University Student Bursary Trust Fund to achieve this goal. The department is working with post-secondary education institutions to consider innovative approaches to maximize the benefit from the Nova Scotia Crown Share University Infrastructure Trust Fund. Also, the department will work with the Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) to continue to expand the enrolment capacity of the NSCC to meet the labour market demands for the College's graduates.

Working with our education partners, students, and parents in 2009–10 we will continue to build a high quality, accessible education system that meets the educational needs of all Nova Scotians.

Original signed by

Honourable Marilyn More
Minister of Education

Original signed by

Dennis Cochrane
Deputy Minister

2. Mission

The department's goals, guiding principles and strategies help to develop an environment where education and training are valued, achievement is celebrated, and learners are provided with opportunities and tools for rewarding and successful learning experiences.

Our mission is...

to provide excellence in education and training for personal fulfilment and for a productive, prosperous society.

Belief statements that underpin this mission statement reflect the department's commitment of access to lifelong learning opportunities, full participation at all levels of the education, training for all Nova Scotians, and accountability of all partners.

3. Planning Context

A) The Planning Environment

The context in which the Department of Education works is influenced by a number of factors. These factors include key strengths, strategic issues, challenges, and partnerships. As needs change, the department must have a strong capacity to address current and emerging issues and challenges, as well as build on existing strengths. As with many organizations and businesses in the province, in 2009–10 the global economic situation will impact the activities of the Department of Education and the context in which the department operates.

Key Strengths and Opportunities

Performance on International Assessments

Nova Scotia 15-year-olds performed above the international average in science, mathematics and reading, according to the results of a respected international student assessment. Nova Scotia science students outperformed their counterparts in 40 countries. Nova Scotia grade 4 students were ranked among the world's best young readers, outperforming England and the United States, and scored significantly above the average in an international reading assessment.

Strong Literacy Skills

The 2008–09 Elementary Literacy Assessment shows that 93 per cent of grade 6 students met expectations for writing and 86 per cent met or exceeded expectations in reading. The 2008–09 Junior High Literacy Assessment found 92 per cent of grade 9 students in English school boards met expectations in writing, while 85 per cent met the standard in reading.

*Post-secondary
Environment*

With eleven universities and thirteen campuses of the Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) distributed across the province, most Nova Scotians have convenient geographic access to post-secondary education. Twenty-nine per cent of Nova Scotians, aged 18 to 24, are enrolled in universities in Nova Scotia, compared to the 18 to 24 year old population of the province, the highest participation among the Maritime Provinces. Nova Scotia has the highest university enrolment as a percentage of the total population in Canada.

The NSCC has increased enrolment by 54 per cent since 2000, and 92 per cent of the NSCC's graduates are employed, 88 per cent in their field of choice.

*Improved Access
to Post-secondary
Education*

Because of aggressive provincial investments, Nova Scotia was the only province to report a tuition decrease for 2008–09.

Student assistance helps ensure that no qualified student is denied access to post-secondary education as a result of financial constraints. The province has the second lowest interest rate in Canada for student loans. The Student Assistance Office offers a range of programs to help students in need, including direct lending of loans, bursaries, grants, debt-repayment, and debt-forgiveness initiatives.

Key Strategic Issues

*Teacher
Professional
Learning and
Instructional
Leadership*

Research shows that differences in teacher quality are the main determinant of differences in student learning. The most successful education systems around the world in terms of student achievement have demonstrated that job-embedded learning, where teachers are engaged in collaborative professional learning as part of their daily work, has been critical to their success.

The department will continue to work with school boards and other partners to support our teachers and principals in achieving excellence in instruction and leadership. The department recognizes this as an ongoing strategic issue and will continue its targeted investments to support mentors and coaches, school improvement initiatives, the use of student data to inform professional practice, and literacy and math strategies.

*Healthy, Active
Learners*

Given the increasing health concerns with our youth, schools play an important role in promoting healthy living. Nova Scotia's innovative Health Promoting Schools Program draws together a variety of health and education partners to ensure key school health programs—such as healthy eating, physical activity, youth sexual health, tobacco reduction, addiction prevention, and injury prevention—are delivered to students in a cohesive and interesting way. Students receive support to become better, more engaged learners at school and healthier Nova Scotians for life.

*Inter-Sectoral
Issues*

Many issues that face the education system cannot be addressed by one department alone. It has become clear that to achieve our goals, collaborative work among departments is essential. Many of the current projects being undertaken by the department are collaborative efforts with other departments, including Health Promoting Schools, and Active Kids, Healthy Kids.

*Skilled and
Knowledgeable
Workforce*

Over the next decade, declining population growth, an aging population, changing technology, and rising education and skill requirements will require new partnerships and creative approaches to knowledge and skill development. The changing nature of work, society, the economy, and technology require that learning institutions provide options and opportunities that will allow students to reach their potential by acquiring the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed in today's world.

Accountability

The department will continue to strengthen accountability at all levels of the education system. A key element of accountability is to ensure that standards of quality are established, measured, and reported upon. These standards enable the system to measure its achievements and determine where improvements are required. It is important to monitor the performance of students and schools and the role of teachers in the teaching and learning process and report the results to stakeholders, including parents.

To improve accountability and ensure that programs and services meet the needs of Nova Scotians, the department will implement the results of several major reviews completed over the past few years. The reviews undertaken include services for students with special needs, Mi'kmaq services, teacher education, and school board governance.

*Communication
with Partners*

Nova Scotia's public education system represents a complex, multi-stakeholder communications environment. The Department of Education, school boards, principals, teachers, school advisory councils, parents, and others must work together in a variety of configurations in the best interests of students. This requires a communications system that is targeted, flexible, and inclusive.

Key Challenges

*Demographic
Shift*

The education system continues to face considerable demographic pressures, particularly in rural communities and small schools, that will require an integrated approach to policy development and planning. The current funding allocation model among school boards uses enrolment as one of several determinants. Declining enrolment creates challenges in teaching, particularly in later grades with regard to the range of courses that can be offered and the acquisition of teachers for specialized courses. As teachers retire, a shortage of teachers in some subjects is predicted. Declining populations in rural areas of Nova Scotia also present challenges to rural public library systems in terms of service delivery and funding. While declining primary–12 enrolments may lead to some decline in post-secondary enrolments, there is expected to be at least a partial offsetting effect brought about by increasing demand for programming in the health professions, graduate studies, applied programs, and trades training. Finally, as professors age and retire, faculty recruitment and retention will be a very significant issue facing our post-secondary education system.

*Aging
Infrastructure*

Another ongoing challenge for the education system is the maintenance and building of public education facilities at all levels. Facilities require continuous maintenance because of aging, changes to building codes, and requirements for new technology. This challenge is faced by the higher education institutions, particularly universities with their need to replace aging facilities. In January 2008, a study prepared for the Council of Atlantic Deputy Ministers of Education and Training estimated the cost of deferred maintenance among Nova Scotia universities and at the NSCC to be \$621 million. The creation of the Nova Scotia Crown Share University Infrastructure Trust Fund in 2008 began to address this issue. Under Industry Canada's Knowledge Infrastructure Program, Nova Scotia post-secondary education institutions have received approval for \$114 million in infrastructure projects, with 50 percent of the funding from Industry Canada and the remaining 50 percent from the province and the institutions. This program will make a significant impact on the extent of deferred maintenance, but significant additional funding will be required. The challenge is also faced by the department's Learning Resource and Technology Production Facility, last updated in 1992, and the province's public library systems.

Key Partnerships for Inter-Governmental Initiatives

*Strategy for
Children and
Youth: Our Kids
are Worth It*

The departments of Community Services, Health, Education, Health Promotion and Protection, and Justice are working together to improve services for children and youth through the development of a comprehensive child and youth strategy which focuses on early intervention, support for families, and youth at risk. Specifically, these departments have committed to partnering and coordinating responsibilities for children and youth. This strategy is based on the principles of collaboration, co-ordination, and shared responsibility.

*Nova Scotia Drug
Strategy*

The Nova Scotia Drug Strategy, currently in development, will focus on four key elements: prevention, treatment, harm reduction, and enforcement, thereby providing a balanced approach to the issue. The Department of Education works with the Department of Health Promotion and Protection, Justice, and other partners to support school boards and schools in addressing prevention and early intervention.

*Regional and Pan-
Canadian
Partnerships*

Through the Council of Atlantic Ministers of Education and Training (CAMET) and the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC), Nova Scotia participates in regional and national initiatives to share resources related to education and training and to address related issues.

The Department of Education is participating in CAMET primary–12 projects focused on educational leadership, instructional practice for all students, second language portfolios and a common framework of references for languages, and literacy, as well as a numeracy project for which Nova Scotia has lead responsibility.

Through a leadership role in the Copyright Consortium, the Department of Education participates in efforts to encourage the federal government to ensure that amendments to copyright legislation address the needs of students and teachers to access publicly available digital material on the Internet for use in the classroom.

The department is also contributing to the implementation of the Pan-Canadian Literacy Action Plan, which includes Early Learning and primary–12 components.

*Persons with
Disabilities*

Through the Labour Market Agreement for Persons with Disabilities the department partners with the federal government to improve access to post-secondary education for persons with disabilities. The department is committed to ensuring that services offered through Post-Secondary Disability Services continue.

*Increased
Supports for
Aboriginal
Students*

A new Mi'kmaq Liaison office with an expanded mandate has been established. The new office will bring a stronger voice to the department's senior management table and will improve services and supports for Mi'kmaw and other Aboriginal students studying at all levels in Nova Scotia.

An historic agreement signed last year between the province and the aboriginal education group Mi'kmaq Kina'matnewey will result in improved educational opportunities and support for all Mi'kmaw children in Nova Scotia.

B) Department Structure

The Department of Education mandate spans the education system from school entry through to all post-secondary destinations. These destinations include community college, private career college, university, and other venues supporting human development. Other responsibilities include public libraries. The Department of Education is structured into operational units which are described briefly below.

Public Schools Branch

This branch comprises African Canadian Services, Education Quality Services, English Program Services, Evaluation Services, French Second Language Program Services, Learning Resources and Technology Services, Mi'kmaq Liaison Office, Regional Education Services, School Board Labour Relations, and Student Services. The branch is responsible for all educational programs for the English language public school system. In close collaboration with the Acadian and French Language Services Branch, it is responsible for services provided to the public school system in assessment and evaluation, educational technology, and school board liaison.

Acadian and French Language Services Branch

The Acadian and French Language Services Branch monitors and approves curriculum development for French first language education. The branch co-ordinates activities related to federal-provincial funding agreements for French minority language education, French second language instruction, minority-language school-community centre renovation and construction initiatives, and co-ordinates and manages implementation of national official languages programs for Nova Scotia. This branch is responsible for liaison with all community and representative groups related to French first language education and for the coordination of all French language services related to the *French Language Services Act/Loi sur les services en français* and its regulations, including implementing priorities identified in the departmental French Language Services Plan.

Higher Education Branch

The Higher Education Branch contributes to lifelong learning by providing funding, services, and support to post-secondary institutions and public libraries to maintain access to high quality post-secondary education and information. The branch's Student Loan Programs provide financial support to post-secondary students through grants and repayable loans. Further, this branch supports the provision of the necessary highly qualified personnel to meet labour market demand and the need for a knowledgeable, engaged citizenry. The branch comprises Universities and Colleges, Student Assistance, Private Career Colleges, Post-Secondary Disability Services, and the Provincial Library.

Corporate Policy Branch

This branch comprises Policy and Planning and Information Management. It is responsible for providing advice and support in policy, planning, legislation, research, coordination, and information and publishing services to all areas of the department. Corporate Policy coordinates departmental accountability processes including the departmental business plan and support to school board planning processes. This branch also includes the following responsibilities: the departmental library, records management, co-ordination of appointments to agencies, boards and commissions, and administration and advice on the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

Corporate Services Branch

This branch comprises Financial Management, Education Funding and Accountability, Facilities Management, Information Technology Services, Statistics and Data Management, and Teacher Certification. It is responsible for the delivery of business and support services to the Department of Education, including the provision of facilities planning and capital projects, financial management and comptrollership responsibilities, information technology, the province-wide delivery of data communications, the management of education-related data and statistics, providing selected services to school boards (including a common-wide area) network and co-ordination of pupil transportation with boards, as well as being responsible for teacher licensing services and conduct of teachers.

Human Resources

This Corporate Service Unit provides human resource management services to the department, with specific attention in a given year to the priorities as defined through the multi-year Human Resources Strategy and the Corporate Human Resources Plan. Further detail on the department's Human Resources Strategy can be found in Section 7.

Communications

Communications provides communications support for government and Department of Education programs, policies, and initiatives. This includes communications planning, issues management, media relations, special events, stakeholder communications, and promotion/marketing.

4. Goals of the Department

The Department of Education's goals for 2009–10 are as follows:

1. Improve conditions for learning in the public education system.
2. Strengthen educational programming and services in priority areas.
3. Enable the provision of relevant and high quality post-secondary education and training.
4. Promote healthy, active learning communities and families.
5. Foster access, equity and diversity through and within education and training.
6. Develop a skilled and adaptable workforce.
7. Strengthen accountability in the areas of governance, resource investment and utilization, and reporting of results.

5. Core Business Areas and Functions

The mandate of the Department of Education spans the public school system, the community college, universities, private career colleges, post-secondary disability services, student assistance, public libraries, and other programs and services to support lifelong learning. The core business areas of the department closely mirror the department's operational organization. The core business areas are primary–12 education, higher education, corporate policy, and corporate services. Identified below are the related core business functions for each core business area.

1. Primary–12 Education

The functions under this core business area involve activities relating to primary–12 education for English first language, French first language, and French second language students. This core business area involves coordinating the design, development, implementation, and evaluation of programs, courses, services, and related policies and resources for the public school system.

These functions include provincial, national, and international assessments of student achievement; special education; comprehensive guidance and counseling; multicultural education; integration and advocacy for diversity, equity, and anti-bias; support services for the educational achievement of Mi'kmaq and African Nova Scotians; school accreditation; the evaluation and provision of print and technological learning resources; professional learning opportunities for administrators and teachers; correspondence studies and online learning; provision of labour relations support to school boards and the provision of advice to school boards in educational and operational matters.

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The functions of Primary–12 Education are as follows:

- advise the Minister on all matters relating to primary–12 education
- identify priorities, co-ordinate the development, and evaluate the implementation of public school programs, policies, educational services, and related priorities
- provide direction and advice to school boards on all matters pertaining to public education
- co-ordinate the development and implementation of educational programming and services to support African Nova Scotian students, Mi'kmaw students, and students enrolled in French, English, Mi'kmaw and Gaelic second language programs
- provide direction regarding diversity, equity, and anti-bias on all matters relating to primary–12 education
- co-ordinate the development and implementation of programming and services for students with special needs and other student support services
- evaluate resources to be included in *Authorized Learning Resources* and provide technology services to support curriculum delivery
- provide online education services to increase accessibility to curriculum and professional learning opportunities for teachers and administrators
- co-ordinate the Nova Scotia School Accreditation Program (NSSAP) that includes a school improvement planning process
- co-ordinate provincial, national, and international assessments and publish results in an annual *Minister's Report to Parents*
- plan and conduct in-service teacher education and summer institutes, and assist school boards in developing and providing professional development programs
- negotiate, coordinate and administer federal assistance initiatives under the Official Languages Support Program Agreement for French minority language and French second language programs
- in collaboration with the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC) and the federal Department of Canadian Heritage, coordinate and administer the French minority and French second language programs which include several bursary and language monitor programs
- provide labour relations and legal advisory and representational services to school boards
- provide consultative and advisory and liaison services between school boards and the Department of Education, as well as other education partners such as universities, colleges, other departments and agencies, professional associations and organizations

2. Higher Education

This branch promotes equitable and affordable access to quality higher education and knowledge for Nova Scotians in partnership with post-secondary institutions and public libraries. The Higher Education core business area contributes to lifelong learning by providing funding, services and support to post-secondary institutions and public libraries to maintain access to high quality post-secondary education and information. Further, this core business area supports the provision of the necessary, highly qualified personnel to meet labour market demand and the need for a knowledgeable, engaged citizenry.

The functions of Higher Education are as follows:

- provide funding and support to universities and the Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC)
- advise the Minister on all matters relating to universities, the NSCC and post-secondary education issues on a provincial, regional and national level
- assist the post-secondary education institutions in the development of people, knowledge and entrepreneurial activity
- coordinate federal-provincial and interprovincial negotiations related to post-secondary education, such as student loan policy
- administer the Canada and Nova Scotia Student Assistance programs, including management and stewardship of the Nova Scotia student loan portfolio
- advise the Minister on all matters related to regional public libraries and the *Libraries Act*
- coordinate public library services and promote library cooperation at national, regional, and provincial levels
- assist adult Nova Scotians with disabilities to obtain access to and succeed in post-secondary training
- guide universities and the NSCC in the delivery of disability services through research and policy development
- advise the Minister on matters relating to training at private career colleges and develop related policy

3. Corporate Policy

The Corporate Policy core business area provides advice and support in policy, planning, legislation, research, coordination, strategic consultations, and information services to all areas of the department. This core business area is focused on ensuring that the department has clear, achievable, and appropriate policies in place, decisions are based on high quality research and consultation undertaken to address current and emerging issues, the business planning and budgeting processes are integrated, and the accountability requirements of the department are met.

The functions of Corporate Policy are as follows:

- establish the department's policy and planning agenda and co-ordinate the development, communication, and evaluation of policy for all departmental jurisdictions
- lead strategic and business planning for the department, enhance the integration of planning and budgeting processes, and provide guidance and support to school boards in the development of their business plans
- support a strategic focus on corporate departmental issues and co-ordinate the legislative agenda and related processes
- initiate, co-ordinate, and ensure quality control of all policy proposals, departmental positions, Cabinet submissions, and briefing material to support the Deputy Minister, Minister, and Premier
- design and lead large inter-stakeholder meetings to consult on strategic issues and foster linkages with key partners
- ensure the department meets its accountability requirements through publication of an annual Accountability Report
- undertake focused research to address current and emerging issues, and co-ordinate surveys, evaluations, and studies
- co-ordinate interprovincial and intergovernmental relations in matters relating to the responsibilities of the department
- administer the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* for the department and advise on issues related to access to information and privacy
- manage departmental information resources and library services, and develop, implement, and maintain the department's records management system
- provide an electronic and print publishing service
- co-ordinate the appointments process for agencies, boards, and commissions under the department's mandate

4. Corporate Services

The Corporate Services core business area involves the provision of a range of services to the department, school boards, the Nova Scotia Community College, universities, public libraries, and other related organizations to assist the department in meeting its mandate. These services are in the key areas of financial management and control, facilities and transportation, information technology, statistics and data management, and the distribution of learning resources and related products. The Information Technology Services component of the Branch is a corporate services unit which also serves other departments.

The functions of Corporate Services are as follows:

- administer provincial grants to school boards, colleges, universities, community learning organizations, and public libraries
- provide comptrollership functions for the department including financial reporting, budget management, internal control, and administration
- undertake grant-recipient audits, facilities planning, and equipment acquisition
- establish accountability and financial guidelines for school boards and monitor school board financial performance
- manage the province's school capital program, including the construction of new schools, major alterations and additions to existing schools, the leased school program, and the school indoor air quality program
- monitor school board student transportation systems
- develop and maintain a comprehensive management information system and statistical service relating to public education matters
- co-ordinate and support the use of information technology and provide related consultative and advisory services throughout the education and training system
- provide co-ordinated wide area network (EDnet) communications and services to schools, school boards, the Nova Scotia Community College, Université Sainte-Anne, and libraries for administrative systems, online learning and access to the Internet by students, teachers and the public
- operate the school book bureau
- provide teacher certification and classification functions, and recognize and maintain teacher service records

6. Priorities and Performance Measures for 2009–10

Priorities have been grouped under the appropriate strategic goal. This provides a clear linkage between the department's strategic planning and the corresponding priority areas in which work for the 2009–10 year will be focused. Unless otherwise specified, the following primary–12 priorities apply to programming for both English as a first language and French as a first language.

Goal 1: Improve conditions for learning in the public education system

Nova Scotia School Accreditation Program

The department will increase the number of schools participating in the Nova Scotia School Accreditation Program (NSSAP) as resources allow. In 2009–10 the province-wide implementation of the NSSAP will be in its fifth year. The NSSAP engages schools in an extensive review of their student achievement and school performance. Accredited schools present data to demonstrate that they are improving in the areas of student achievement and school performance. To date, 13 schools have successfully completed the NSSAP. Sixteen schools were presented with Accreditation at the end of the 2008–09 school year.

Support Professional Learning

The department will work with school boards and key partners to respond to the recommendations of the Education Professional Development Committee to embed reflective professional learning practices in the everyday work of teachers. The focus will be on teacher collaborative practices and shared learning, instructional leadership program development, accessing student-level data to inform teachers' professional practice, and providing other supporting resources to increase student achievement.

Support Evidence-Based Decision Making

The department, in collaboration with boards and Dr. Ron Ferguson of Harvard University, will survey identified pilot schools within the Nova Scotia public school system to examine the impact of classroom instruction, curriculum content, and pedagogy on the success of student learners, particularly students who are African Nova Scotian, First Nation, and of ethnic diversity. This will be done through the Achievement Gap Initiative (AGI) and Tripod Project. The project's focus is on raising academic performance for all students and narrowing academic performance gaps for students from diverse backgrounds.

Develop Instructional Leadership Program

The department will begin to work with partners to develop a research-based program of instructional leadership to support school principals and aspiring school-based leaders. The provincial program will focus on key strategies of instruction-related leadership effectiveness, how to build and manage successful collaborative teams through group processes, as well as how to address issues that influence instructional improvement and the process of school accountability.

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Implement the Strategy for Children and Youth: Our Kids Are Worth It

The departments of Community Services, Health, Education, Health Promotion and Protection, and Justice are working together to improve services for children and youth through the implementation of a comprehensive child and youth strategy which focuses on early intervention and on support for families and youth at risk.

As part of implementing the Strategy, the Department of Education will

- ▶ lead the Schools Plus pilot project, beginning with sites in four school boards: the Chignecto-Central, Halifax, South Shore and Strait Regional School Boards. This initiative will focus on building a comprehensive and collaborative interagency approach to meeting the needs of children and youth at risk in the public school system. The schools will become centres of service delivery with referrals to a wide range of specialist support services including speech language pathology, child and adolescent mental health services, family support services, child care, and intensive behaviour support and sexual health services.
- ▶ implement the Early Development Instrument (EDI) in three of the school boards with School Plus initiatives (Chignecto-Central, Halifax, and Strait Regional School Boards). The EDI is a population health survey that measures early development in physical health, social competence, emotional maturity, language and cognitive development, and communication skills/general knowledge, for populations of young children.
- ▶ work with school boards, other departments, the child-care sector, and education partners to identify opportunities to use school space for early learning programming for young children and their families.
- ▶ support boards' implementation of "school attachment programs" including the Options and Opportunities (O₂) program, co-operative education, career-related courses, and skilled trades education (see Goal 6). The department will also develop a DVD to showcase and promote co-operative education, community-based learning, and the O₂ program.

Positive and Effective Behaviour Supports Strategy (PEBS)

The department will implement phase two of the PEBS Strategy with in-servicing for board lead teams regarding targeted behaviour and academic interventions for students demonstrating disruptive behaviour. The department will implement a data collection procedure to collect data on student behaviour and interventions used to support students.

Increase Alignment Between Teacher Educational Background and Subjects Taught

In 2007, the Department of Education's report *Audit of Teaching Assignments* identified several subject areas of particular concern with respect to the proportion of junior and senior high school courses being taught by teachers without related undergraduate educational backgrounds. In 2009–10, a committee of department and school board staff will begin to develop recommendations to improve the alignment of teacher education and subjects taught.

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Continue School Capital Construction Program

The department will continue implementation of the province's School Capital Construction Program, maintaining and refurbishing the province's public schools. In 2009–10, it is anticipated that three new schools will finish construction, and that seven school additions and alterations projects will be completed.

Review of the Implementation of the BLAC (Black Learners Advisory Committee) Report on Education

In 2008–09, the department hired a consultant to review the programs and services implemented in response to the *BLAC Report on Education: Redressing Inequity-Empowering Black Learners*. Published in 1994, the BLAC Report outlined a number of recommendations aimed at improving the opportunities and achievements of African Nova Scotian learners. The results of this review will be submitted to the department in Spring 2009. In 2009–10, the department will work with school boards and other stakeholders to consider the results of this review.

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Goal 1 Performance Measures

Outcome: Schools identify areas needing improvement and develop a plan

Measure	Baseline Data	Data	Target (2010–11)	Strategies
Number of schools involved in the Nova Scotia School Accreditation Program (NSSAP)	49 (2005–06)	115 (2006–07) 210 (2007–08) 312 (2008–09) 408 (2009–10)	All 432 schools	Workshops and support materials (e.g., handbooks) for all schools involved. Conduct external reviews for each school.
Number of schools receiving accreditation	11 (2007–08)	17 (2008–09)	115	Monitoring of annual reports of NSSAP by REO and Regional Board Coordinator. Conduct accreditation visits.

Outcome: Class sizes are reduced

Measure	Baseline Data	Data	Target (2010–11)	Strategies
Number of grade levels for which class size is capped at 25	Primary (2003–04)	P–1 (2004–05) P–2 (2005–06) P–3 (2006–07) P–3 (2008–09) ¹ P–4 (2009–10) ²	P– 6	Over time, expand the Class Size Initiative up to and including grade 6 as resources allow.

¹In 2008–09, grade 4 class sizes were capped at 28.

²In 2009–10, the cap of 28 for grade 4 is removed, but it is expected classes will not exceed 30.

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Outcome: Students have access to computers at school

Measure	Baseline Data	Data	Target (2010–11)	Strategies
Per cent of grade 10–12 classrooms with three or more current computers	31.8% (2005–06)	43.1% (2006–07) 40% (2007–08)	65%	The Information Economy Initiative extension program funds software, professional development and technological support in schools. The technology recycling program provided 6,040 computers and laptops to schools in 2008-09.

Outcome: Better Educated Nova Scotians

Measure	Baseline Data	Data	Target (2010–11)	Strategies
High School Graduation Rate	84.8% (2006–07)	83.9% (2007–08)	Increase over baseline	Implement strategies targeted towards youth at risk of leaving school early.

Goal 2: *Strengthen educational programming and services in priority areas*

Respond to Recommendations from Minister's Review of Services for Students with Special Needs

In 2007, through a public consultation process, an external Review Panel examined special education programming and services to determine if they are achieving their desired results. In 2009–10, the department will move forward on a number of projects in response to the recommendations of the Review Panel. These include development of a provincial learning disability strategy, the release of updated Teacher Assistant Guidelines, and the development of teacher resources on programming related to life skills.

Provide Supports for Teachers of Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder

The department will continue to provide support to school boards for professional development and resources for teachers to develop and consolidate skills in teaching students with Autism Spectrum Disorder. The department serves, with the departments of Health and Community Services, on an Autism Interdepartmental Committee. The committee will submit a report with recommendations to the respective departments.

Increase Training Available for French Immersion Resource Teachers

The Department of Education will conduct an analysis of the first cohort of students in the university degree program in resource teaching for students in French immersion at St. Francis Xavier University. Results of the analysis will indicate whether subsequent cohorts are required to strengthen the capacity of boards to offer appropriate French immersion programming for all students.

Implement the Action Plan to Increase Enrolment in French Second Language

The department will complete a study of the Intensive French (Français intensif) program to determine its future direction. Activities to implement the French second language action plan include conducting a French immersion program evaluation with grade 12 students; implementing a promotional campaign to highlight the advantages of French second language learning; increasing the number of core French pilot classes; implementing the strategies and intensity of Intensive French programming; increasing the number of correspondence and on-line courses for French second language students; increasing the number of students participating in the Diplôme d'études en langue française (DELF) international assessment of French second language skills; and providing funding for core French mentors in each board.

Increase the Number of French Second Language Teachers

To help meet the need for qualified French second language educators, the department will increase the number of teachers participating in the on-line French language course; the number of summer language opportunities for interested teachers, administrators, guidance counselors and school librarians/library technicians; and make available French second language bursaries for Bachelor of Education students.

French second language professional development opportunities in literacy strategies will target core French, integrated French, and immersion teachers in grades 7–12. Learning resources for students and professional resources for teachers will be provided to French immersion and integrated French

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teachers in French language arts, and in other curriculum areas (mathematics, science, healthy living, and social studies) to French immersion teachers and students.

Early Years Programming

The 2009–10 school year is the second year in which the December 31 cut-off date for school eligibility has been in effect. The Department of Education will work with school board staff to ensure that classrooms have developmentally appropriate and educationally sound learning resources in place and that teachers and administrators have continued access to professional learning opportunities to support both grade primary and primary-to-grade-1 transition. These opportunities will include workshops that focus on science, visual arts, and physical activity, and a summer literacy institute designed to address the professional learning needs of primary and grade 1 teachers. *Primary Program: A Teaching Resource* will be implemented.

Reduce the Total Number of Curriculum Outcomes

The department is working with teachers and other partners to review curriculum outcomes in selected subject areas, with the intent of reducing the total number of outcomes that teachers are required to address and students are expected to achieve within instructional time allotments. The focus of this work in 2009–10 will be the review of outcomes for Health Education Primary–6, Healthy Living 7–9, and Social Studies 9. Further to consultation with education partners, the department will complete the revision of mathematics curriculum outcomes.

Science

The department will support boards and their schools in the delivery of science curriculum in combined classrooms at the elementary level, this includes providing two resources: *Science Primary/1 Handbook: A Resource for Teachers* and *Science 4/5: A Resource for Teachers*.

The department will provide opportunities for students in grades 4 and 5 to participate in Nova Scotia Science Olympics and students in grades 7–12 to participate in regional science fairs and the Team Nova Scotia Showcase. The department will work with the Canadian Space Agency, under the terms of a Memorandum of Understanding, to provide curriculum resources and presenters to support implementation of Space units in grades 6 and 9.

Arts Education

The department will introduce new Visual Arts 7, Music 7, and Band Instruments 7 courses and resources and begin the development of new grade 8 courses in these disciplines. The department will work with partners to enhance opportunities for learning in, through, and about the arts.

Public School Advanced Programming

The department will introduce a new Advanced Biology 11 course and related resources. The department will support implementation of advanced arts education and global studies courses and begin the development of new advanced public school program online courses.

The International Baccalaureate (IB) diploma program is a two-year curriculum offered as a program option to Nova Scotia senior high students in selected schools. It leads to a qualification that is

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widely recognized by the world's leading universities. In 2009–10, there will be more than 700 students registered as IB Diploma students in 13 high schools in Nova Scotia.

Mathematics

The department will work with boards to plan the process of piloting and implementing the revised mathematics curriculum, primary–9. Pilots will begin in September 2010 and will be supported by the provision of curriculum materials and other resources. The department will upgrade the Mathematics Itembank for grades 7–12 to reflect changes in the curriculum. The Itembank is a website that includes mathematics questions and answers on grade 7–12 math courses. In 2009–10, new geometry outcomes will be finalized for grade 9.

The department will work with partners to develop a planning and assessment website for classroom teachers. As part of the numeracy project with other Atlantic education departments, the department will develop the first of a series of introductory classroom-based math assessment resources. This project will support teacher professional learning for instructional improvement.

The department will make professional learning resources available to additional sites to support the improvement goals at the school level. The support for elementary teachers through the Mathematics 4 and 5: Support Project will be expanded to grade 6 teachers. Online resources to support instruction in algebra at the senior high level will be made available.

The department will continue the development of the Mathematical Literacy Assessment Program with the addition of assessments at the upper elementary and junior high levels.

Literacy

A number of projects are underway to support literacy including the development of a grades primary–3 writing workshop DVD and the initiation of a Writers in Action primary–3 project to be phased in over three years beginning with a *Writers in Action Primary–1* implementation workshop in Fall 2010.

The department will support implementation of *Teaching in Action* resources in grades primary–9. The department will work with school boards to develop an Active Young Readers/Active Readers Implementation Review Principal's Resource to assist principals in assessing the extent and effectiveness of classroom implementation of these literacy initiatives.

To build board and school leadership capacity, the department will provide Writers in Action 10 and 11 professional learning opportunities; a Literacy Success 10, 11, and 12 professional learning workshop for school leaders; and three literacy institutes featuring international presenters.

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Use Literacy Assessment Results to Support Students

In 2009–10, the Language Literacy Assessment Program will be administered in grades 3, 6, and 9. Each assessment will yield individual student results for schools and for parents/guardians. The results will be used by schools to inform instructional planning to guide student development as readers and writers, in particular for those students whose assessment results indicate the need for focused attention to their ongoing literacy development. School boards and the department will continue to monitor progress of students in reading and writing through key stages.

Education for Sustainable Development

Sustainability education is a focus of the department and curriculum focused on this issue permeates the public school program. The department will work with partners under the auspices of the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC) to develop an *Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) Framework for Collaboration and Action*. Related projects will include direction and support for the effective integration of sustainable development concepts into curricula delivery and the development of ESD-related teaching resources and material.

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Goal 2 Performance Measures

Outcome: Nova Scotia students have improved reading and writing skills

Measure	Baseline Data	Data	Target	Strategies
Early Elementary Literacy Assessment (grade 3), per cent meeting provincial expectations in Language Arts	75% (2007–08)	82% (2008–09)	Increase over baseline (2011–12)	Increase support for and access to Reading Recovery™. Implement <i>Teaching in Action Primary–3, 4–6, and 7–9</i> resources. Writers in Action grades 4–11.
Elementary Literacy Assessment (grade 6), per cent meeting provincial expectations in reading and writing	81% (2004–05)	74% (2005–06) 78% (2006–07) 82% (2007–08) 82% (2008–09)	Increase over baseline (2009–10)	Increase the number of literacy mentors. Active Young Readers/Jeunes Lecteurs actifs in grades primary–6 and Active Readers/Lecteurs actifs 7–9. Mandate instructional time allotment for language arts for grades primary–8.
Junior High Literacy Assessment, per cent meeting provincial expectations	82% (2007–08)	81% (2008–09)	Increase over baseline (2011–12)	Implement <i>Spelling Grades Primary–9: A Teaching Resource</i> . Professional learning, print and media resources, workshops, institutes.

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Outcome: Nova Scotia students have improved math skills

Measure	Baseline Data	Data	Target (2011–12)	Strategies
Early Elementary Mathematics Assessment (grade 3), per cent meeting provincial expectations	67% (2007–08)	72% (2008–09)	Increase over baseline	Teaching resources for mathematics grades primary–9. Mandate instructional time allotment for mathematics for grades primary–8. Increase the number of math mentors. Expand the implementation of the <i>PRIME</i> professional learning program. Review specific curriculum outcomes, primary–3. Implement <i>Atlantic Canada Mathematics Assessment Resource, Entry–3</i>.

Goal 3: *Enable the provision of relevant and high quality post-secondary education and training*

Bring Tuition Fees to the National Average by 2010–11

The Memorandum of Understanding on University Funding and Tuition Fees freezes tuition fees for all students at Nova Scotia universities. The Nova Scotia University Student Bursary Trust reduces tuition fees for all Nova Scotia students studying at Nova Scotia universities by \$1,022 in 2009–10 and \$1,283 in 2010–11, and for Canadian students from outside Nova Scotia by \$261 in 2010–11. The Department of Education will monitor the national average of university tuition fees to ensure Nova Scotia is on track to reach the national average in 2010–11.

Memorandum of Understanding on University Funding and Tuition Fees

The Department of Education will administer the terms and conditions of the Memorandum of Understanding on University Funding and Tuition Fees, signed between the province and the universities. The MOU covers the three-year period from 2008–09 to 2010–11 and provides funding based on expenditures, amounting to \$30 million in new funding for each year of the agreement. The MOU ensures that tuition fees will be frozen for all students studying at Nova Scotia universities over the three-year period.

Post-Secondary Education Infrastructure

The Department of Education will continue dialogue with its post-secondary education institutions to consider innovative approaches to addressing the infrastructure renewal needs within this sector. The Province will work with its post-secondary education institutions to ensure that maximum benefit is received from the investment of \$114 million in infrastructure projects through Industry Canada's Knowledge Infrastructure Program. Under this program the federal government provides 50 percent of the funding, and the Province will ensure that the remaining \$57 million is available to enable the projects to proceed.

The Department of Education continues to work on a regional and pan-Canadian level to gain support from the federal government to address the infrastructure renewal needs of Nova Scotia's universities and the Nova Scotia Community College.

Continued Investment in Capacity at NSCC

The initial growth plan of the Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) is coming to completion, with enrolment exceeding the growth plan target of 10,400 (actual enrolment for 2008–09 is 10,505) and construction of the second (Phase II) building on the Waterfront Campus underway. In balance with its fiscal capacity, the Department of Education will work with NSCC to continue expanding enrolment capacity to ensure that it is able to meet the demand for seats and the labour market demand for NSCC graduates.

Conduct Research of Relevance to Nova Scotia Education Policy via the Minister's Post-Secondary Education Research Advisory Panel

The Panel has been established and is now moving forward with a number of research projects of relevance to post-secondary education in Nova Scotia. These projects focus on access, quality, retention and persistence, and student debt. The first report is expected to be presented to the Minister in the Fall.

Implement Minister's Response to the Review of Teacher Education

The department will continue to implement the accepted recommendations from the Review of Teacher Education focusing in particular on the establishment of a new advisory council on teacher education, a working group to examine issues and concerns related to the student practicum component of the Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) program, and the introduction of legislation that will require Nova Scotia universities to obtain ministerial approval in order to introduce B.Ed. programs directly or through articulated agreements with other universities. Universities wishing to offer the B.Ed. program, whether alone or in partnership, would be required to meet certain requirements.

In addition, a survey will be planned to gather information on the labour market experiences of graduates of the B.Ed. programs in Nova Scotia. The survey will be administered in the Spring of 2010.

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Goal 3 Performance Measures

Outcome: Better Educated Nova Scotians

Measure	Baseline Data	Data	Target (2010–11)	Strategies
Average Nova Scotia tuition fee <i>Source: Statistics Canada TLAC Survey</i>	\$6,422 (2006–07)	\$6,110 ³ (2007–08) \$5,932 (2008–09)	national average tuition ⁴	Premier's commitment to reduce tuition to national average by 2010–11 via Nova Scotia University Student Bursary Trust.
Nova Scotians enrolled in Canadian universities <i>Source: Statistics Canada, Post-secondary Information System</i>	32,230 (2002–03)	33,175 (2003–04) 32,682 (2004–05)	Increase over baseline	MOU with Universities on Funding and Fees. Nova Scotia Community College development and growth strategy.
Per cent of Nova Scotians aged 25–54 with post-secondary certificate, diploma, or degree <i>Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey</i>	61.8% (2004–05)	60.5% (2005–06) 61.2% (2006–07) 61.5% (2007–08)	Increase over baseline	Improvements to the Student Assistance Program. Improve access to grants targeted at students with disabilities. Establish post-secondary disability service standards.
Number of diplomas, certificates and degrees issued by Nova Scotia Institutions <i>Source: Statistics Canada, Post-secondary Information System, and the Nova Scotia Community College</i>	12,398 (2003–04)	13,246 (2004–05) 13,195 ⁵ (2005–06) 13,966 (2006–07)	Increase over baseline	Improve infrastructure via Nova Scotia Crown Share Infrastructure Trust Fund.

³This number differs from the 2007–08 data (\$5,878) reported in the 2008–09 Business Plan for this measure because Statistics Canada updated Nova Scotia average tuition from \$5,878 to \$6,110 in its October 9, 2008 tuition release.

⁴The target for this measure is dependent upon Statistics Canada annual calculations of the national average tuition fees. The target is for Nova Scotia tuition to reach the national average by 2010 as calculated by Statistics Canada that year.

⁵The 2004–05 and 2005–06 figures for this measure differ from the ones reported in the 2008–09 Business Plan (13,258 and 13,187) because of updates by Statistics Canada to the data on diplomas, certificates and degrees issued by Nova Scotia institutions.

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Measure	Baseline Data	Data	Target (2010–11)	Strategies
Enrolment at the Nova Scotia Community College	8,978 (2005–06)	9,347 (2006–07)	10,725	
		9,922 (2007–08)		
		10,505 (2008–09)		
<i>Source: NSCC</i>				

Goal 4: *Promote healthy, active learning communities and families*

Implement the Health Promoting Schools Strategy

The department, in partnership with the Department of Health Promotion and Protection, school boards, and district health authorities, will showcase achievements of the Health Promoting Schools program in various regions across the province. The department will facilitate schools' access to resources and knowledge tools that address specific topics such as healthy eating, physical activity, and sexual health. Mental health promotion and integration in schools and enhanced capacity for early identification and intervention will be a particular focus of the Health Promoting Schools program at the provincial level in 2009–10.

Support Health Education

With partners, the department will complete the review and revision of curriculum outcomes prescribed for Health Education Primary–6 and Healthy Living 7–8. The department will develop new curriculum and related resources for the Healthy Living 9 course. This project will include the integration of an enhanced workplace health and safety unit, to be piloted in 2009–10.

The department will support boards and schools in strengthening delivery of mental and emotional health education components of the curriculum, grades 4–9, and will introduce a teaching resource for mental and emotional health components of the grades primary–3 program.

The department will work with partners to support boards and schools in strengthening delivery of injury prevention, addiction prevention, and sexual health components of the curriculum.

Food and Nutrition

The department will support implementation of standards for the provincial breakfast program. The department will provide monitoring tools to assist boards and their schools in evaluating implementation of the *Food and Nutrition Policy for Nova Scotia Public Schools*. It is expected that in the 2009–10 school year, all schools will have implemented all policy directives identified within the *Food and Nutrition Policy for Nova Scotia Public Schools*, as well as the Food and Beverage Standards for Nova Scotia Public Schools.

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Advance the Active Kids, Healthy Kids Strategy

In collaboration with the Department of Health Promotion and Protection and other partners, the department will support school boards in advancing the *Active Kids, Healthy Kids* strategy. Priorities in 2009–10 will be supporting more youth to be active and to demonstrate leadership, including the integration of the Youth Fitness Leader Certification Program within the high school physical education program.

In collaboration with the Department of Health Promotion and Protection and school boards, the department will sustain the sport animator initiative to continue bridging school and community resources for improving opportunities for play, recreation, and sport.

Increase Support for Physical Education

Students graduating in 2011 will be required to have a physical education credit. The department will provide grants to school boards to address various needs they have identified to implement the new requirement. The department will support boards and their schools in the implementation of grades 10 and 11 physical education courses.

Goal 5: Foster access, equity and diversity through and within education and training

Increase Access to Correspondence and Online Courses

The department will increase its French second language correspondence study and online course offerings. The department will fund 200 student seats in online learning courses. The department will work with school boards and the International Baccalaureate Organization to plan a pilot of online IB courses. The department will also expand opportunities for professional learning for teachers and administrators using the common online learning platform.

Provide More Supports for African Nova Scotian Learners

The department will co-ordinate with the Nova Scotia Community College and the Schools of Education to implement a balanced framework to support diversity and equity policies and practices. The department will expand the parent outreach and education program, providing ten workshops across the province, focusing on raising resilient African Canadian children. The department will co-ordinate with the Council on African Canadian Education to implement the Youth Leadership and Development Program for African Nova Scotian youth in ten schools. The department will coordinate with the Department of Labour and Workforce Development to increase participation of African Nova Scotian youth in apprenticeship training by developing a recruitment and retention strategy.

Increase Programs and Services for Mi'kmaw Learners and Increase Knowledge about Mi'kmaq Culture

Under the Mi'kmaq Education Agreement, the department will assist Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey (MK) to administer provincial assessments in all provincial MK schools allowing for smoother transfers for students moving between MK schools and the public school system. In 2009–10, the Cross Cultural Education Program, administered in public schools by the Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq, will continue with the first stage of a province-wide support program for Mi'kmaw learners. In addition, the department will review and update the Mi'kmaq Studies 10 curriculum.

Support Gaelic Programming

The department will continue to support Gaelic language curriculum implementation in grades 3–9 and offer professional development opportunities for teachers. Program grants to school boards to fund Gaelic language teachers will continue as resources allow.

Assess Progress of Racial Equity Policy Implementation

School boards have identified the Racial Equity Policy–Innovative Configuration (IC) Map as a valuable tool for planning and have noted its practical use as an assessment lens and as a professional development planning instrument. The IC Map, which is being collaboratively developed by RCH Coordinators, will be shared with all boards and the department. As part of the strategy to implement the Racial Equity Policy at the department level, the Racial Equity Advisory Committee will assess progress toward the three outcomes and related strategies of the plan.

Enhance the Nova Scotia Student Assistance Program

The Student Assistance Office will continue to improve assistance and service to post-secondary education students through a number of new initiatives from both a provincial and federal level. The federal Canada Student Grant, that will be implemented for 2009–10, will benefit students from low and middle income groups, students with dependants, students with disabilities, married students, and students studying part time. The Student Assistance Office continues to work with Canada Student Loans staff on Service Delivery Vision. This is an ongoing initiative that will simplify the Canada Student Loan Program by providing students with access to a consolidated view of their federal and provincial loans, a master loan agreement, a single electronic application for debt management measures, consolidation of borrower communications, and a single loan payment for multiple loans. An online counseling tool will be developed which will provide students with information on the benefits and costs of funding a post-secondary education. Benefits for Reservists and a Transition Grant to support the phase out of the Canada Millennium Foundation will also be implemented.

The Nova Scotia Student Assistance Office works to ensure that students in Nova Scotia receive the maximum assistance available to allow them to further their post-secondary education. Nova Scotia will work with the Federal Government to implement the changes announced in the 2008 Federal Budget which will also provide more non-repayable assistance and a better debt management program to students.

The Student Assistance Office reallocated funds from the back end debt reduction program to establish an up front grant in August 2008. In January 2009, students began to receive their Nova Scotia loan disbursement as result of this grant. The grant will be monitored to determine the impact on participation rates in post-secondary institutions. Information will be available in 2009–10.

Ensure Ease of Access to Library Resources

Through *Libraries Nova Scotia*, a collaboration among public, university and college libraries, the Department will lead the development of a Borrow Anywhere/Return Anywhere pilot, to be implemented in the Fall of 2009. In addition, an investigation into the expansion of the licensing of electronic databases will be completed.

Improve Post-Secondary Access for Persons with Disabilities

The department will review the eligibility requirements for persons with disabilities accessing post-secondary supports through the Post-Secondary Disability Services division. Specifically, the department will review the eligibility policy related to intellectual and cognitive disorders.

Based on an initial review of data concerning participation of students with disabilities in graduate programs, it appears that there may be a significantly lower participation rate when compared to the general university population. The department will determine whether a significantly lower participation rate exists. If it does exist, the department will examine the reasons for the difference and outline measures that could be taken to increase the representation of students with disabilities within graduate programs.

Goal 5 Performance Measures

Outcome: Responsive and Flexible Learning Environment

Measure	Baseline Data	Data	Target (2010–11)	Strategies
Student enrolment in online public school courses	77 provincially funded students (2005–06)	94 provincially funded students (2006–07) 94 provincially funded students (2007–08) 194 provincially funded students (2008–09)	Increase over baseline	Coordinate online pilot courses with school boards and increase provincially funded seats for small schools.

Outcome: Students with Disabilities Have Increased Access to Post-Secondary Education

Measure	Baseline Data	Data	Target (2010–11)	Strategies
Number of students with disabilities graduating with post-secondary certificate, diploma or degree who receive assistance from the Province of Nova Scotia.	478 (2005–06)	537 (2006–07) 578 (2007–08)	740	Improved marketing materials: website, handbooks, brochures. Special project funding to institutions.
Per cent of total student enrolment at colleges and universities in Nova Scotia receiving assistance from one or more of the provincial programs for students with disabilities.	4.1% (2005–06)	4.2% (2006–07) 4.8% (2007–08)	6%	Establish goods and services standards. Building connections with primary–12 system. Survey students with disabilities to determine success strategies and gaps.

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Outcome: Improved Funding and Program Delivery of Nova Scotia Student Assistance

Measure	Baseline Data	Data	Target (2009–10)	Strategies
Value of grants issued for under-represented groups	\$3,036,462 (2004–05)	\$8,866,815 (2005–06) \$8,725,907 (2006–07) ⁶	Increase value of grants issued by 10% over baseline	Improvements to the Student Assistance Program. Introduction of needs-based grants for under-represented groups, including students from low-income families and students with disabilities. Federal/Provincial/Territorial discussions on improving student loan access.

⁶2006–07 is the most recent school year for which data is available.

Goal 6: Develop a skilled and adaptable workforce

Expand the Options and Opportunities Program

In 2009–10, the department will continue implementation of the highly successful Options and Opportunities (O₂) program in 44 schools and will expand the program from grade 11 to grade 12 in seven schools and from grade 10 to grade 11 in nine schools. O₂ connects high school students with employers, secures admission to the Nova Scotia Community College upon graduation, and helps prepare students for success in the labour market.

Support Community-Based Learning

The department will work with partners to expand co-operative education and other forms of community-based learning to provide students with practical work experience opportunities and increase the involvement of communities in mentoring students. The department will provide targeted funding support for more than 30 schools to offer co-operative education beyond the O₂ program and will offer mentor services for co-op teachers and their principals. The department will work with partners to update the Workplace Health and Safety 11 course, develop the in-school pre-placement component for co-operative education, and develop Community-Based Learning 10.

Expand Skilled Trades Education

The department will work with school boards, the NSCC, and sector partners to support the integration of skilled trades education within the public school program. In the 2009–10 school year, Skilled Trades Education 10 will be offered by more schools and Construction Trades 11 will be piloted. The department will partner with school boards, the NSCC, and the Construction Association of Nova Scotia (CANS) to expand the CANS Building Futures for Youth program, which provides co-operative education and youth apprenticeship opportunities for high school students interested in exploring construction trades.

Expand Workplace Health and Safety Education

The department will work with partners to develop an enhanced pilot Workplace Health and Safety Unit for the Healthy Living course. The project will include development of a strategy to provide professional learning opportunities for teachers and classroom resources for students.

Provide More Resources for the Youth Pathways and Transitions Strategy

In accordance with the Nunn Commission recommendation to expand Youth Pathways and Transitions programming, in 2009–10 the department will implement Career Development 10, Introduction to Business Technology 11, Accounting 11, and Sound Recording and Technology 11.

Government has committed to enhance opportunities for hands-on learning by implementing new curricula for family studies and technology education. Workshops will be offered in the 2009–10 school year to support implementation of, Textile Arts in grade 7, and five new half-credit course options for grade 10: Food Technology 10, Food Preparation and Service 10, International Foods 10, Food for Healthy Living 10, and Textile Production 10. Resources will be provided to support implementation.

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Building on the successful launch of Exploring Technology 10 in 2008–09, the department will develop new technology education courses for grade 11 and launch Communications Technology 11. The department will work with partners to design and develop a new technology education program for junior high students, beginning with grade 7 in 2009–10.

Support Transition of Young Adults with Special Needs

In partnership with the Department of Community Services, the Department of Education will support young adults with special needs who are transitioning from secondary school to community living and work. Two Post-Secondary Transition Support Programs (funded by the two departments) will be offered over a maximum period of 12 months and will provide employability preparation and/or post-secondary education preparation. The two departments are discussing program expansion in 2009–10.

Goal 6 Performance Measures

Outcome: Students make more effective career decisions

Measure	Baseline Data	Data	Target 2012-13	Strategies
Student enrolment in the Options and Opportunities (O ₂) Program	1,301 (2008–09)	1,301 (2008–09)	Increase over baseline	Implement strategies targeted towards youth at risk of leaving school early. Nova Scotia Community College development and growth strategy.
Number of credits completed by students in the Co-operative Education Program	1,283 (2005–06)	2,257 (2007–08) ⁷	Increase over baseline	Increase awareness of and access to pathways to post-secondary destinations. Provide opportunities to improve career development and education decision making.

⁷Data for this performance measure is collected biennially, no data were collected for 2006–07.

Goal 7: Strengthen accountability in the areas of governance, resource investment and utilization, and reporting of results

Measure and Report on Student Achievement

The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) will be administered in the Spring of 2009. PISA assesses the skills of 15-year-old students in mathematics, reading, and science. Each administration has a different major focus. In 2009, reading will be the major focus, mathematics and science the minor focus. PISA 2009 will initiate the second cycle of the assessment and will provide comparative data for reading in 2003 and 2006.

Development work is under way on a new grade 6 provincial Elementary Mathematics Assessment (EMA). The new assessment will be administered to students who wrote the Early Elementary Mathematical Literacy Assessment in 2007. The first administration of the EMA is anticipated for June of the 2009–10 school year.

The department is developing a new online reporting system that will permit the acquisition and roll out of results from provincial assessments at the class, school, and board levels. The system will provide results at these three levels in table and chart formats.

Implement a Provincial Student Information System

In 2009–10, the school boards and the department will begin implementation of a provincial student information system. The new system will give teachers and administrators the tools they need to manage school operations, and analyze and report on student achievement and other vital student, school, and program data for policy and program decisions. Processes such as registration and enrolment, attendance, student scheduling, behaviour, student progress, and individual program plans will be supported. The new system will increase the types of data collected, improve access to the data in terms of quality and timeliness, and improve accountability throughout the public education system.

Implement Recommendations of the Multi-year Operating Funding Strategy with Library Boards

A proposal for a memorandum of understanding amongst library boards, municipalities and the provincial government that provides for operating grants to regional library boards has been completed. The Library Funding Task force submitted its report and recommendations to the Minister in August 2008. Implementation of the recommendations are contingent upon government approval.

Implement the Departmental French Language Services Plan

The priorities outlined in the Department of Education's 2008–09 French Language Services Plan will be implemented with a focus on assessment of existing French language services and identification of key areas where these services are required; provision of French language training opportunities for employees; and, participation on the Government's French Language Coordinators' Committee.

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Undertake Review of Publishing Needs and Practices

A review of the department's publishing needs and practices is underway. The review will be undertaken in consultation with key clients and will include identification of what is working well in current practices, where efficiencies can be made, and recommendations to develop a service model to meet the needs of the department.

Undertake a Review of Policies Pertaining to Private Career Colleges

The department, in an effort to achieve better regulations, will consult with private career college operators for the purpose of determining where changes to existing departmental policies may be needed. This review and focused consultation may lead to legislative and/or regulatory changes in 2010–11.

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Goal 7 Performance Measures

Outcome: Nova Scotia is accountable for education based on international comparison of assessment results

Measure	Baseline Data	Data	Target (2010–11)	Strategies
Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) results for 15-year-olds, scale score	<u>Reading</u> 513 (NS 2003) <u>Math</u> 515 (NS 2003) <u>Science</u> 505 (NS 2003)	<u>Reading</u> 505 (NS 2006) <u>Math</u> 506 (NS 2006) <u>Science</u> 520 (NS 2006)	Nova Scotia's best results since participating in PISA. ⁸ <u>Reading</u> 521 (NS 2000) <u>Math</u> 515 (NS 2003) <u>Science</u> 520 (NS 2006)	Increase board leadership capacity to support school-based professional learning communities. Increase the number of literacy and math mentors. Provide access to Reading Recovery™ for all grade 1 classes. Implement <i>Teaching in Action</i> resources for grades primary–3, 4–6, and 7–9. Support implementation of Literacy Success 10, 11, and 12. Reduce total number of curriculum outcomes in science and mathematics. Implement teaching resources for mathematics primary–9. Implement <i>PRIME</i> , <i>Dynamic Classroom Assessment</i> , and <i>BreakThrough</i> professional learning programs. Support implementation of science curriculum for grades primary–10.

⁸The target for this measure was adjusted to enable reporting on achievement in each subject area included in the assessment. The next administration of PISA will take place in 2009; the target year was extended to 2010–11, to allow reporting subsequent to release of the results.

Outcome: Better Educated Nova Scotians

Measure	Baseline Data	Data	Target (2009–10)	Strategies
Nova Scotia Examinations (NSE), per cent passing	<u>English:</u> 76% (2003–04) <u>Chemistry:</u> 66% (2003–04) <u>Physics:</u> 59% (2003–04) <u>Math</u> ⁹ : 31% (2004–05)	<u>English:</u> 89% (2004–05) 87% (2005–06) 79% (2006–07) <u>Chemistry</u> ¹⁰ : 59% (2004–05) <u>Physics:</u> 59% (2004–05) 61% (2005–06) 56% (2006–07) <u>Math</u> 28% (2005–06) 26% (2006–07) 50% (2007–08)	Increase over baseline	Implement Writers in Action/Écrivains à l'oeuvre 4–11. Implement resources that can be used by Mathematics 10–12 teachers to increase the algebra skills of students. Upgrade the online Mathematics Itembank. Create a Mathematics Professional Learning website. Increase the number of literacy and math mentors. Implement <i>Teaching in Action</i> resources for grades primary–9 and develop <i>Teaching in Action</i> 10–12. Implement Literacy Success 10, 11 and 12. Implement <i>PRIME</i>, <i>Dynamic Classroom Assessment</i>, and <i>BreakThrough</i> professional learning programs.

⁹2004–05 was the first year the Math NSE was administered.

¹⁰Currently all science exams (physics, chemistry, biology) are on hold.

7. Human Resources Strategy

The Department of Education will focus on providing human resources development activity which is aligned to the Corporate Employee Survey Results as well as the Corporate Human Resources Plan. Activities for 2009–10 will emphasize the following:

To make a difference through a skilled, committed, and accountable public service

As our workplace ages and the competition for skilled employees becomes tighter, we need to be proactive in workforce planning and talent management if we want to make a difference through a skilled, committed, and accountable public service.

The Department of Education has committed to developing a succession/talent management plan. This year the department will focus heavily on performance management and career development plans in preparation for creating the succession/talent management plan.

To be a preferred employer

The Department of Education will be an advocate for change within government around the areas of classification, compensation, and benefits in order to recruit, retain, and develop staff.

To be a safe and supportive environment

In 2009–10, the department will complete and implement the results of the Occupational Health and Safety Audit.

As part of the department's commitment to create a healthy and respectful workplace, it is important for all employees and managers to know how to resolve issues of harassment, sexual harassment and discrimination as early as possible. Therefore, the department will continue to support the roll out of the Respectful Workplace Policy, ensuring that all employees are trained by March 2010.

To be a learning organization

The department will develop a department-wide orientation program for new employees, both at the manager and staff level. The program will be linked corporately.

8. Budget Context

Education and Assistance to Universities			
	2008-09 Estimate	2008-09 Actual	2009-10 Estimate
Program & Service Area	(\$thousands)	(\$thousands)	(\$thousands)
Total Education Program Expenses:			
Senior Management	733	853	750
Corporate Policy	1,767	1,488	1,689
Corporate Services	14,583	14,215	16,058
Public Schools	33,587	32,969	32,123
Higher Education	48,400	41,483	44,002
Acadian & French Language Services	1,130	1,118	1,144
Public Education Funding	905,425	917,177	930,615
Other Grants	17,163	18,694	18,163
Learning Resources Credit Allocation	8,813	8,868	4,813
Teachers' Pension	56,329	57,763	58,712
School Capital Amortization	59,393	58,560	60,954
Community College Grants	114,421	114,272	116,124
Total Education Program Expenses	1,261,744	1,267,460	1,285,147
Total Assistance to Universities	230,511	485,468	455,802
Total DOE & Assistance to Universities	1,492,255	1,752,928	1,740,949
TCA Purchase Requirements	79,728	75,227	173,709
Provincial Funded Staff (FTEs)	305.2	278.6	294.2